



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

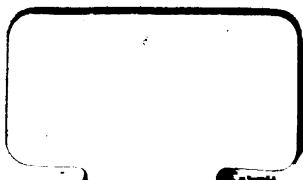
1. Oh

copy

2. "

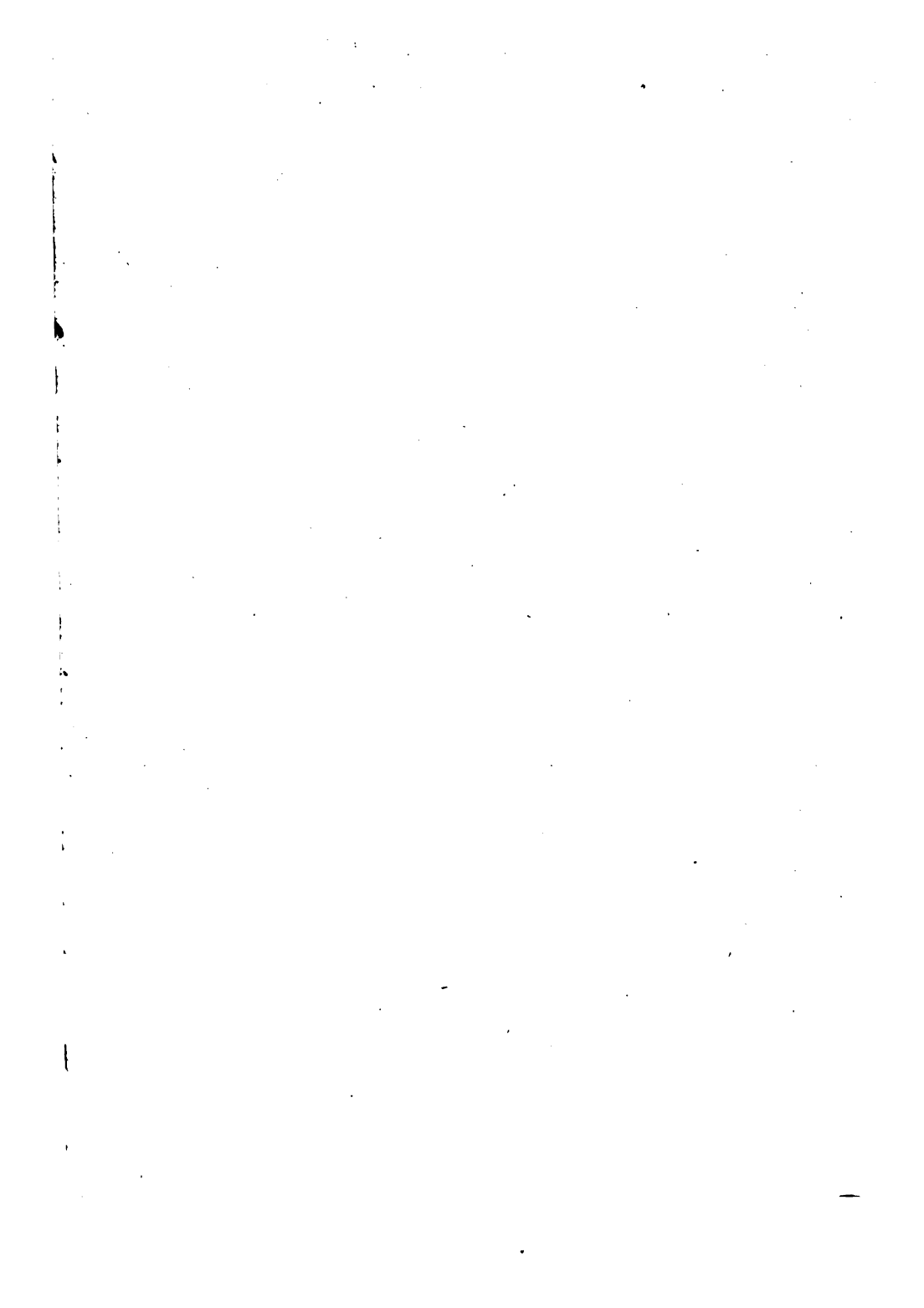
Pioneer life - U.S. - Kentucky

AH



All  
(Chenoweth, J.)  
Pirtle













JAMES CHENOWETH

THE STORY  
OF  
ONE OF THE EARLIEST BOYS  
OF LOUISVILLE

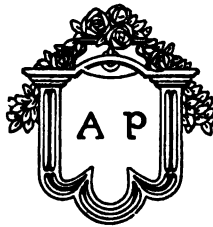
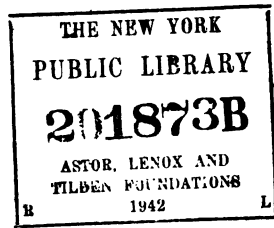
and

WHERE LOUISVILLE  
STARTED

by

ALFRED PIRTLE

Copyright, 1921  
THE STANDARD PRINTING CO.  
INCORPORATED  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



**T**HE FILSON CLUB, in 1920, had a Committee, together with the President of the Club, Alfred Pirtle, and Otto A. Rothert, Secretary, go to the site of "Mulberry Hill" in Camp Zachary Taylor, and build a rough monument of small stones, on the exact spot where the house had stood until 1917, fixing the location by a regular survey, of which the Club has a record.

MULBERRY HILL, FIRST HOME OF  
GEORGE ROGERS CLARK.

Photograph of "Mulberry Hill," the cabin of John Clark, built in 1784 on Beargrass Creek near Poplar Level Road south-east of Louisville, Kentucky, taken in 1890 after the original roof, which was of clapboards (large thin slabs of timber, riven or split off logs, about three feet long, almost a foot wide and two inches thick), had been replaced by one made of shingles.

We are told this is the first log cabin built in Jefferson County, Kentucky, with rooms upstairs. It gave George Rogers Clark the first place he could call "home" in Kentucky. Only the unfilled entrance to the cellar remains to mark the location of the house which lies within the artillery range grounds of Camp Zachary Taylor.

The photograph is placed in this book to show the kind of a house the Chenoweth family had. The windows had no glass in them, but the openings for windows and doors were provided with shutters of heavy timbers and closed with bars, affording protection against the rifle balls the Indians might fire at the house when making an attack.

A great grandson of the builder of "Mulberry Hill" says he has had more than one interesting time digging bullets out of the logs of this very building.



Mulberry Hill, First Home of George Rogers Clark.



## INTRODUCTORY.

**J**AMES CHENOWETH and the other persons mentioned in this story were actual characters, and the names and dates are historic—the only fiction is having him tell his story. Some of his grandchildren are still living, from whom facts have been obtained. A son of James Chenoweth was an uncle of the author, and I was reared along with his children, when all of us were ever ready for Indian stories to entertain our youthful minds. James is supposed to be telling his story in 1850, at Cincinnati. The history of the trials and dangers of our ancestors contains a great deal that we should be proud of and which we should record and hand down to succeeding generations.

ALFRED PIRTLE.





## JAMES CHENOWETH

---

I AM going to tell you about events which happened when I was an infant. Although I can remember things which occurred when I was a boy five or six years old, I will have to rely on what has been told me.

My name is James Chenoweth. I was born May 17, 1777, near the North Mountain in Berkeley County, Virginia. My father, Richard Chenoweth, born in 1718, was from a family which settled in Maryland at a very early date. He was a large man of great strength. He was a carpenter and builder of houses long before I can remember.

My mother was Margaret McCarthy. She was a small woman and had very much the appearance in size of a well-grown girl of twelve or fourteen years. She had a quick, decided temperament, yet she always bore herself as a mother of a family should.

Mildred was the oldest child, then came Thomas and Jane; I am the youngest child.

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

The Revolutionary War had been going on two years when I was born. The "times were hard" in our county in those days. Nevertheless, the children had to be cared for, and the other wants of the growing family continued. Travelers from beyond the mountains, passing through our county, told wonderful tales of the new country called Kentucky. Although this new country was wild, the scenery was beautiful, the trees were large, the lands fertile, and homes could be had for almost the asking.

I have heard my mother tell of the plans she and father made for going over the mountains and valleys and streams to this new land. While they were making their preparations the word went round through the neighborhood that a Lieutenant-Colonel Clark was in the lower counties raising a little army to go to Kentucky in the early Spring of 1778. This rumor was found to be true, and my father, thinking this new country would be a good place for a man of his occupation, decided to take his family and go with Colonel Clark. Besides that, he reasoned that a newer community would be a better place in which to rear a young family.

As there were no passable roads for wagons, our household goods and chattels were loaded

upon six small, but strong, pack horses. Mother rode another horse and carried me in her arms. Milly and Jane rode another, while father and Tom footed it. A rough and lonesome road was followed for some distance until we came upon a well-marked road that the tide of travel had followed for twenty years, from the waters of the Potomac across the Alleghany mountains, to the streams that flowed into the Ohio River. It was not much of a road compared with those of years afterward, but it had the advantage of being well marked. There were many log cabins along the way, however, but unless the weather compelled, we camped out, and did not call on the settlers for anything except feed for the horses. The month of April, 1778, found our family at Red Stone on the bank of the Monongahela River. This place is now Brownsville, Pennsylvania.

When those of the expedition in whom we are interested reached this landing, Lieutenant-Colonel Clark was making preparations to get his soldiers in readiness to float down this river to Fort Pitt, and thence down the Ohio to the Falls, a famous and dreaded locality among the boatmen, because of the rocks in the stream in the Ohio River. In addition to the soldiers, Lieutenant-Colonel

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

Clark found some twenty families waiting to make the voyage under the protection of the troops, for it was generally known that Indians often attacked and killed persons venturing down the Ohio.

In these days of the steamboat, and in some states in our Union of the steam cars, it will be very hard for you to understand how much trouble and hard work it took to make the rough boats in which those who were the pioneers of this western country traveled. When I was young my mother and father tried to tell me about the boat they and their family and other people lived in and floated down the Monongahela and Ohio rivers. I must tell you a little about it.

The landing where the boat was to be built was a smooth slope reaching to the water's edge. The "yard," as it was called, was convenient to the blacksmith shop and the cabins where the people of the little town lived. The boat was to be made, as far as possible, of wood. Iron was very expensive because every pound had to be brought on horseback from beyond the mountains, and therefore could not be used to any extent in building the craft. The lumber out of which the boat was made was obtained from trees which had been cut near the river bank

trimmed and floated down the stream to the "shipyard."

Here the logs were drawn out of the water and raised to a kind of platform, where one man could stand beneath and another man on top of the log, and two men, one pulling the saw up and the other down, could saw the log into planks. This, of course, was a slow process. Later sawmills run by horse power were introduced, and still later those propelled by steam. The larger timbers of the boat were hewn out of large logs. The broadaxe and adz were used for this purpose. These timbers were sometimes as large as nine by twenty-four inches by fifty feet. They were placed about twenty feet apart to form the outside timbers or gunwales of the boat. Then planks were closely laid from one to the other of these long timbers. At the ends they fitted into what carpenters called a "gain" or groove. Of course there was frequently some little space between these bottom boards. These spaces or cracks were tightly filled with oakum, driven in by hammer, or with old rope.

It was necessary to construct a boat with the top side down, and turning it over before being floated was a big job. This was done by raising one side of the boat with long poles

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

as levers until it stood on its side. It was then let down gradually by means of shorter poles or posts until the bottom was on the ground. The finishing touches to the hull were then put on. The boat now being ready for the "launching," large timbers, called "ways," were laid, inclining from the boat to the water. The boat was then placed on these timbers and held from sliding down the ways by a rope.

When all was in readiness the rope was cut, and the boat slid from the shore into the river. The boat was then tied to the shore and the process of finishing began. Uprights, about six feet high, were fastened to the heavy gunwales, and to these planks were pinned. This furnished protection against the fire of the Indians in case of an attack. The bow of the boat was enclosed the same way, except that a small deck was left where the crew of the boat could move about to fasten the lines that were used to "tie up" the boat, where a landing was made for some purpose. The stern was generally enclosed to the roof. Doors were placed in the sides and bow. Scuttle-holes for going up and down from the main body of the boat were made in the roof at convenient places. There was always a short stairs near the women's part of the boat,

to be used by the women and children when a landing was made. Holes were cut in the sides and ends, from which guns could be fired in case of an attack by Indians.

The boats were allowed to drift, but were also propelled in shallow water by poles touching the bottom, while deckhands walked along the sides from the bow to the stern, thus pushing the boat along. In deep water the boat was propelled by means of large oars placed on a pivot on each side of the boat. To steer this unwieldy craft there was a large oar mounted on the stern and the steersman walked across the roof and pushed on his oar, directing the boat to the left or right.

When the boat upon which we were to go was finished, the men and older boys were quartered in the bow, and the women and children in the stern. The baggage was stowed away in the most convenient places. In the stern of the boat a fireplace had been built, so that in rainy weather, or when the boat could not land, cooking could be done. This fireplace was built almost like those built in the log cabins. Dirt was spread over a four by six feet space, and then over this a layer of stones was placed. Then the chimney of clay and sticks was built high enough to

go above the top of the boat. A small supply of wood was taken on board. The fire was kept burning all the time, because if it went out it would be difficult to start again. (You will remember that matches had not been invented at that time.) The only means of rekindling it would be to get fire from another boat, or to start it from a "flint and steel."

The flint was a small piece of certain kind of hard stone. The "steel" was a very hard piece of steel about three inches long, a half inch broad and a quarter of an inch thick. The flint and steel, and a small piece of punk, were usually carried in the breast pocket of the hunting shirt. (Punk is wood, almost decayed and very easily set on fire.) To start a fire the pioneers would strike the edge of the flint with the steel and the sparks flying into the punk would set it on fire. Then very dry leaves would be used to coax the fire along until it caught small twigs and fine kindling.

Firearms were also fired by striking the steel against the flint so that the sparks would drop in a small pan in the lock of the gun, thus igniting the powder. The expression, "did not amount to a flash in the pan," arose from the fact that many times the



---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

powder in the pan of the gun did not discharge the gun.

We left Red Stone in April and moved down to Fort Pitt, located at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers. Here we remained until the soldiers had loaded their provisions and war materials. The little fleet under the command of Colonel Clark floated slowly down the river by day. When darkness came on, the boats were tied up to the bank, and the people would land and camp for the night. Guards were set over the boats and in the woods back of the camp. During this long voyage the soldiers and settlers became wellacquainted.

The voyage ended May 27, 1778. The boats were tied up to trees on an island near the Kentucky shore above the Falls of the Ohio River. The rich soil of this island was covered with trees, and the soldiers and men were set to work to make a clearing. Cabins were built for the settlers. An enclosure or stockade was built, and in this the soldiers were quartered in log cabins, and in log cabins military supplies were stored. Corn was planted, and a good crop was yielded the first year. The place, therefore, was named Corn Island.

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

(Note—Corn Island has since been swallowed up by the waters of the Ohio and now it is all bare rocks, where once the tall sycamore, the oak, the cottonwood and other trees grew in beautiful profusion. This was true in the days of James Chenoweth.)

Colonel Clark continued to enroll men for his expedition. The settlers at Harrodsburg and Boonesboro had heard of his intended expedition, and some of them came to Colonel Clark to assist him in recruiting. Among these men was Colonel Todd. Recruits also joined the expedition from other camps. Early in the morning of Wednesday, June 24th, the camp was all astir. The fastest boats, such as are now called "skiffs," had been loaded and everything was ready for the expedition to start when Colonel Clark should give the command. All those persons who were to remain, stationed themselves near the upper point of the island. About ten o'clock, the little fleet of boats carrying nearly 120 men passed down the Ohio near the right bank, and disappeared behind the island. (Note—The sun which had been growing darker and darker, passed into a total eclipse just as they descended the Falls.)

Near the close of Summer, Simon Kenton and another soldier, with a letter from Colonel

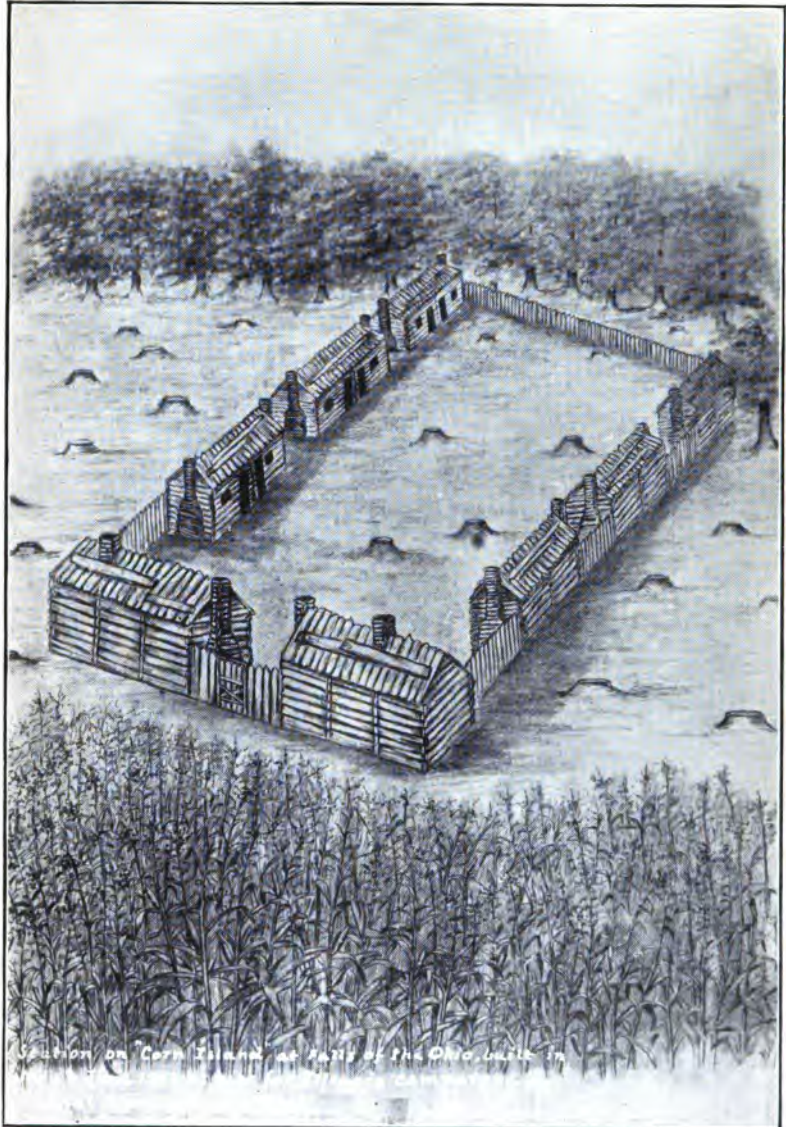
The Fort or Station  
on  
Corn Island.

### THE FORT OR STATION ON CORN ISLAND

As the men who were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Rogers Clark were not educated in art, we have no pictures of the fort or island, but the accompanying illustration will give you an idea of the usual aspect of the homes of the earliest settlers.

Pictures of the first station built by the settlers are usually incorrect in one particular as they have the roofs slanting both ways, while the men who had to live in them made the wall of the outside of the cabin so high that no one could get to the top without a ladder and had the slant of the roof towards the inside of the station grounds with the expectation that the Indians could not burn the cabins by firing arrows into the roofs.

The fort built by the settlers on Corn Island (what is now Twelfth and Rowan streets, Louisville, Kentucky), in the Fall of 1778, had two-story cabins at the four corners called block-houses, each extending two feet outside of the line of the sides of the station, giving the men in them a view of all that went on.



The Fort or Station on Corn Island.



Clark to Governor Patrick Henry, stopped at the island. He also had an order from Colonel Clark to the settlers to construct a fort on the Kentucky shore where they might pass the Winter, and be better protected from the Indians, and also avoid being driven from the island by a rise in the river. The men, who had looked closely at the trees, found marks, which to their experienced eyes showed that some time before our landing there had been a flood several feet deep on the island.

During the flood of the year 1847, the writer stood upon the site of Fort Nelson and saw that Corn Island was entirely under water.

Corn Island had almost disappeared in 1881. Only a few fragments could be seen near where the bridge spans the river below the Falls.

In the river, beyond the dam now there, Corn Island is gradually rising. The river every Spring leaves a small deposit of mud among the willows that cover the island. A good view of the new island can be had from the foot of Ninth Street.

In obedience to Colonel Clark's order, a party of men was sent to look at the lay of the land and select a place for a settlement. The highest point of the river bank, where a long view up and down the river could be had, was

chosen. Not far from what is now Twelfth and Rowan streets, near this place, was a good spring of cold water. The Summer drought had lowered the water in the river, so that there was a large space of bare rocks near the foot of the island. Over these rocks the settlers walked to the shore of the left bank.

My father, being more experienced than anyone else in the party, was selected to direct the building of the little fortification. A space of ground two hundred feet long from north to south and one hundred feet from east to west, was staked off, and the work of cutting off the trees in this enclosure was begun. The bushes and shrubs were dug up by the roots. Such trees as could be used in building the cabins and the stockade were cut up for those purposes.

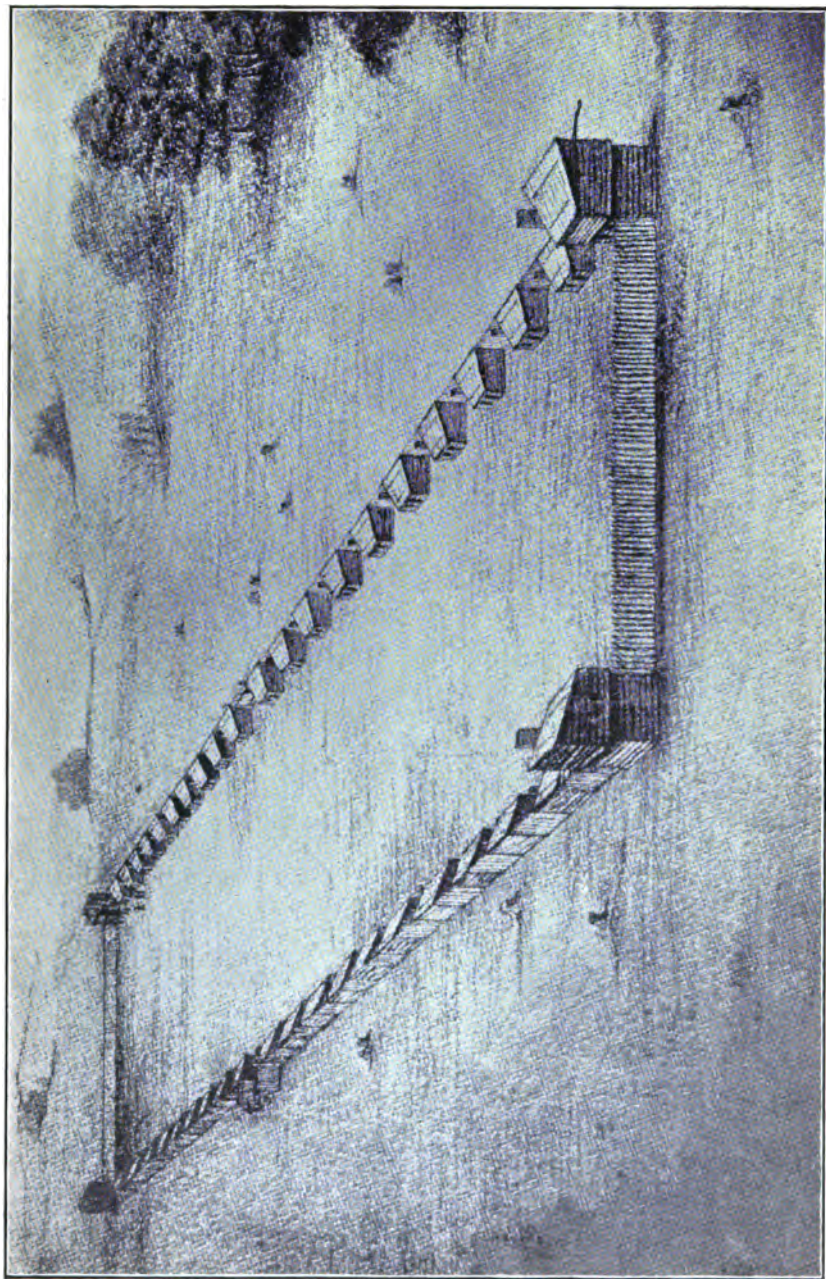
There were eight cabins on the east and west sides, four across each end, and a block-house on each corner to be constructed. It may be interesting to know how these cabins were built. The logs used in the walls of the cabins were cut the proper length, the sides hewed and the ends notched where they were joined, as they were placed one on the other. Clapboards were made for the roof, while broad flat pieces were used for the floor. The rafters and door pieces were fastened



Blockhouses  
at  
Bryant's Station.

**BLOCKHOUSES AT BRYANT'S STATION**

Projecting beyond the lines of the stockades, with second story extending out over the first story, gave the men in the second story a chance to fire down upon the foe should they attempt to get into the fort.



Blockhouses at Bryant's Station.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

with hickory pins. Very few or no nails were to be had in those days. The doors were made of straight-grained wood, split to the thickness needed, and hung on wooden hinges. The latch of wood dropped into a wooden catch on the door-frame inside the cabin. Above the latch a hole in the door let a string pass to the outside, so that the latch could be raised from the outside.

(Note—When the latch-string was drawn in, it was a signal that you must knock or ask to be allowed to come in. This gave rise to the common saying “Hang the latch-string out,” as a sign of welcome.)

The windows of the cabins were closed with wooden shutters on hinges and fastened by a wooden pin. The fireplace was wide and deep, and when stone could not be had was constructed of wood and clay.

For fear some of you will not know what a blockhouse was, I will say that it was a cabin at the corner of the fort which was used by the soldiers when the fort was attacked by the Indians, and was so built that the soldiers could fire their guns in every direction. These cabins projected about three feet beyond the lines of the stockade. Holes were made in the projecting walls so that the men in the blockhouse could fire at any enemy who

might seek to break down the gate or set fire to the stockade.

The stockade was about ten feet high, and was built by placing thick timbers in the ground about three feet, and tamping the earth firmly around each piece, so that they gave the appearance of a strong wooden wall. This wall was thick enough to resist a rifle ball, and the edges of each timber were trimmed by the axe to fit to the next timber and leave no space or crack.

The work of building the stockade and cabins was pushed with vigor all Fall, and the "house warming" party was held in the blockhouse of the new fort on the night of December 24, 1778.

On this Christmas eve a great feast had been spread in one of the blockhouses. To prepare this feast, it had taken the time and labor of all the cooks in the settlement for two days. It is said there were deer, bear, coon, 'possum, wild turkey, corn bread, flour bread, wild grapes, persimmons, wild honey, hominy and parched corn in great abundance. It is doubtful about the flour.

The feast over, the young people were impatient to begin dancing. It so happened that in a party of immigrants bound down the

river, which had landed a day or two before, there was a Frenchman who was a dancing teacher. There was also in our settlement a negro named Cato. Cato was a fiddler, but at this time had only two strings left to his fiddle. Now this Frenchman was anxious to get an invitation to the festivities, and gave Cato the strings for his violin for seeing that he got the needed invitation.

But Monsieur was also asked to bring his fiddle and furnish the music, which he was proud to do, while poor old Cato was neglected. The master played tunes that none of the company knew. He tried to teach them some dances that were all the go in Paris, France, where he had been teaching. The young folks were too lazy or did not want to learn anything new. They made fun of his illustrations of how they were to walk, or bend gracefully. Seeing that the French airs and graces were all thrown away on them, his patience exhausted, fully disgusted, he packed his fiddle, and descended the bank to the boat in which he had come.

In the meantime, Cato, having repaired his fiddle, had learned of the fun going on in the blockhouse and was ready when the young men hauled him upon the floor. All were soon dancing to the music he had learned

away back in old Virginia, and a merrier party never welcomed the coming of a Christmas day.

The little fort soon became too small, for settlers came frequently. Colonel Clark returned from the capture of Vincennes the next Spring and made his headquarters in a cabin of the fort. Here he kept up his correspondence with the Governor of Virginia and gave orders for the building of other forts in the new country.

In course of some years, I learned that the second Winter we spent on shore in and near the little fort erected for the people who had been on Corn Island, was the most severe that any of the settlers ever experienced in the wilderness. The river was frozen for a long time so that one could walk across above the Falls. Many of the springs were frozen. Trees are said to have been cracked open by the frosts. The few domestic animals, which had been brought by the settlers in 1779, stood around the cabins night and day, making a mute appeal for food and shelter, and had to be cared for by the settlers. It was said that young deer and buffalo, being driven by hunger, mingled with the animals of the barnyards.



The next Summer my father built a cabin for our family near the mouth of Beargrass Creek. The settlement grew in that direction, and Colonel John Floyd made quite a station on the top of the bank a little above the creek. This same year, 1780, the name Louisville was applied to the Falls of the Ohio, in honor of Louis XVI, King of France, who was proving to be such a friend of the United States in their struggle with England.

At that time there were many large ponds and sloughs near the fort, over which vapors hung. This condition made the place unhealthy, and many people began to build cabins on the high places farther from the river.

My father had become a well known citizen of the little town. The year I was five years old (1782) he took the contract to build a larger and stronger fort up the river just below the mouth of Beargrass Creek. This contract was made with Colonel Clark. I recall the fact that now and then my father took me to see the men at work. I remember the two cannon, and the houses being built inside the fort. I recall that I looked with "all my eyes" at the soldiers who guarded the place.

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

After I became old enough to know about such things, I learned that the contract my father had with Colonel Clark and the State of Virginia for building the fort had been the cause of his making a financial failure.

This fort was a prominent feature in the early history of Louisville, so I will here introduce a description written by Mann Butler about the year 1832. "It was built by the militia from all the settled parts of the district, between the present Sixth and Eighth streets, on the northern side of Main Street, immediately on the bank of the river. In honor of the third governor of the State of Virginia it was named Fort Nelson. Seventh Street passed through the first gate opposite the headquarters of General Clark. The principal military defense in this part of the country deserves a few more particulars. It contained about an acre of ground and was surrounded by a ditch eight feet deep and ten feet wide, intersected in the middle by a row of sharp pickets. This ditch was surmounted by a breastwork of log pens filled with earth obtained from the ditch. Pickets ten feet high were planted on the top of the breastworks. Next to the river, pickets alone were deemed sufficient, aided by the high slope of the river bank. Some of the remains were

found in the Summer of 1832, in excavating the cellar of John Love's stores on Main Street, opposite the Louisville Hotel. There was artillery in the fort, particularly a double fortified brass piece, which was captured by Clark at Vincennes. This piece played no inconsiderable part in the military operations of this period, insignificant as it may appear to the eyes of a regular military critic." (Note—The Union Depot at the foot of Seventh Street stands on the site of the upper end of Fort Nelson.)

When the fort was dismantled some years after I became a man, some of the fragments were accidentally or otherwise buried in the ground. In excavating for buildings years after, these fragments came to light. I remember that Elisha Applegate lived on this site long after the fort had been forgotten. (Like other old men, I find myself wandering away from the story of my early life which I started out to tell you.)

By the time I was seven years old there were many families in Louisville, and of course a large number of children, but there were no schools. On Sunday afternoons, we would sit in the shade and watch the men, as they engaged in jumping, wrestling, foot-racing, pitching quoits and playing marbles.

When we got a chance we imitated the older people. When cool weather came the young people would spend the early part of the night in dancing. When there was a house-raising, that is, when the men of the neighborhood came together to help some man build his cabin, there would be lots of good things to eat, and the boys always managed to get their shares.

There were many slaves here at that time. Most of them were brought from Virginia. Our slaves were bought here in Kentucky. We children, white and black, were companions until we grew up, and then we were always friends.

When I was three years old (1780), Colonel Clark received news that the Indians had killed many settlers, carried off much plunder and quite a number of men, women and children from the land east of Louisville, and made their escape across the Ohio. This roused the Colonel's anger. At once he sent men on swift horses to all the forts on the Licking and Kentucky Rivers, calling for armed volunteers to meet on a certain day at the mouth of the Licking. A large company was raised at our settlement. Over a thousand men were assembled with great celerity and secrecy. Two cannon which Colonel

Clark had captured at Vincennes and brought to the Falls, were mounted in boats. These boats were manned by men trained to the use of cannon, and also experienced boatmen. Colonel Clark, with these boats, voyaged up and down the Ohio, between the Falls and the mouth of the Licking, keeping the Indians from crossing and protecting the many boats loaded with settlers on their way down the river. The Indians knew the range of the balls thrown by these cannon, and they also had a dread of the report made by them, because of the resemblance to thunder. The cannon therefore served to scare the Indians away. Colonel Clark also had a force of men on horseback, and these he sent into the Indians' country before they had time to arouse their friends and fellow savages. They made no stand until Clark reached Piqua, where a battle took place, in which seventeen were slain on each side. Clark burned their town, cut down their corn, which was in roasting-ear condition, tore up such scanty gardens as they had, and laid waste their homes. In a few days all the men were back in Kentucky, with only the above mentioned loss. The Indians, having to make new huts and to hunt to keep food on hand for themselves and families, kept the peace the remainder of the year.

In August, 1782, before Fort Nelson was finished, the dreadful news of the defeat of Blue Licks was brought to General Clark. I was not old enough to know what it all meant, but I remember that there was much weeping among the women, a great deal of talk among the men, and much excitement in general, when it was learned that General Clark had sent a messenger to Colonel Harrod, Squire Boone and Simon Kenton, to again assemble men at the mouth of the Licking River on a certain day. From there they were to follow him into the country of the Indians, where he intended to make war as he had done two years before. General Clark manned the two boats on which he placed the cannon, which he had used two years previously, and with a large number of row-boats, which he had collected at the mouth of Beargrass Creek and filled with men and supplies, he set forth on the second expedition against the Indians.

We boys, all excited, were on the bank and saw the fleet start. It was soon out of our sight. We did not hear from them for weeks. When they returned, they had done so much damage in destroying the huts and crops of the Indians, that no large body of Indians ever made another raid into Kentucky.

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

When I was eight years old, my father bought a large tract of fine land about fifteen miles east of Louisville, and two miles from a settlement called Middletown. A little stream ran through the land which is now known as Chenoweth's run, in honor of my father. We moved to the place after father had built a good double cabin. He then cleared more land, built cabins for the negroes, stables for the horses and cribs for the corn. Father took most pride in a stone spring-house which he built on the side of the branch about two hundred yards from the house. In building this spring-house, he dug back in the bank until he found plenty of water. From stone which he found here, and with lime which he obtained by burning some of the stone, he built the walls. The floor was made by leveling off the natural stone. He put on a good tight roof and made a garret. The garret or loft was reached by ladder from the inside. A door was made in the gable so that it could be entered from the outside by a ladder or by a plank. Loop-holes were left in the sides of the spring-house and rifles could be fired from these holes in case we were attacked by the Indians. As you see, my father meant this to be used as a kind of fort, as well as a spring-house.

In two years much land had been cleared. Our crops of corn, wheat and rye were looking fine. I was then a lad of ten years, running about clad only in a long tow-linen shirt. I was up to everything that was going on on the farm.

On a certain night in June we had a shower, after which we discovered that the horses were not in their stables. Father and Gid Chenoweth, a near relative who was living with us at the time, started to find them. Although uninvited I went along to help. We followed their tracks for about a mile when we saw them grazing near two fields of corn and rye. We leisurely approached them, not expecting anything wrong. Suddenly we were fired upon by a party of Indians not many yards away. Where father and Gid went I never knew, because I was too frightened to look around. With the Indians in full pursuit I flew in the direction of the house as fast as my trembling legs could carry me. (I have always said I ran so fast you might have played marbles on my shirt-tail.) One of the Indians kept after me longer than the other two. Finding I was gaining on him, he fired at me with an arrow, striking me in the right hip. I drew the arrow out, leaving a part of the head in the



wound. As I ran I met mother hurrying toward me. She had heard the guns which the Indians had fired, and had taken two of father's guns and was coming to our aid. I cried out to her, "They killed Dad and Gid but they didn't catch me." I took one gun and mother the other, and with beating hearts we ran back to look for the bodies of the two men. We expected to find that the very worst had befallen them. When we came to a sink-hole where the Indians had made their attack, not a person was in sight. The horses had run a little way and had stopped to graze again. Still my brave mother hurried on, watching every tree and bush, until at length we came to the field where the rye was high, and out of it the two men rushed, unhurt. Mother had to be helped back to the house, while the three railed me about my fast running.

Next Summer (1788) my brother Tom had his experience with the Indians. Tom was a big boy about fourteen years old, just beginning to imitate the ways of men. We had to send our grist to a mill on Floyd's Fork, some distance away. Tom was told to "go to mill." He placed a bag of corn on the back of one of the horses. Although bare-footed he strapped a spur on each ankle.

Riding slowly along the trail through the woods, he lay down on the horse, resting his head on the bag and his legs crossed over the horse's neck. Suddenly the horse stumbled, throwing Tom forward. Forgetting his spurs he clasped his legs around the horse's neck, and the gentle old horse, thus gouged by the spurs, gave a leap and the boy fell off. On getting up he found three or four Indians surrounding him. He was made a prisoner and hurried away to the Indian country. Since he did not come back from the mill that day and since no trace of him or the horse could be found, my father concluded that the Indians had captured him. He had a hard time convincing mother that she would see her boy again. Almost despairingly she hoped that father was right. In the year 1794 (?) we heard that Tom was a prisoner among the Indians on the Mad River in Ohio. A famous chief had taken him into his family, treating him as a son. General Clark, a warm friend of my father, arranged with the British Government at Detroit to exchange an Indian chief for Tom. This took some time, but it was at last done and Tom was brought to Fort Nelson. Here father met him. He had grown to be a man. He was in the full costume of a chief's son, painted

and covered with feathers. These he did not like to put aside for the buckskin suit which father had brought him. They rode out home, arriving about dark. Mother was all in tears to see her boy again.

Tom showed no signs of being glad to get back, asked no questions, was not surprised at anything, and was a good deal of an Indian all over. I noticed he walked like an Indian. He was not used to things at the table. When bedtime came he insisted on putting his blanket on the floor where he could sleep with his feet to the fire. It took years among our people to remove the traces of his life among the Indians. We tried not to notice his peculiar ways. By degrees he learned our customs once more.

In the Summer of 1789 our family consisted of father, mother, Milly, Jane, Naomi, now six years old, and myself. A guard named Bayless, loaned us by the garrison at Louisville, stayed at our house. At that time one John Rose was also there. There were several negroes in the cabins. On July 17th all the white folks after supper were lingering around the table when suddenly the outside door opened and a party of sixteen Indians, yelling with their utmost fury, burst into the room.

---

J A M E S   C H E N O W E T H

---

In a chair near the door I had been asleep. I was thrown to the floor. As I scrambled to my feet an Indian gave me a terrible blow with a tomahawk. How I reached the outside I cannot tell, but I suppose I crawled. I remember that I made my way to a large heap of firewood and hid as far under the brush as I could. An Indian dog evidently scented me, for he ran snuffing around the pile, but left without finding me. I lay there a long time. I must have been considerably stunned by the tomahawk, for I do not remember when the Indians went away. When next I knew anything, there was no noise and no one moving about, no light in the house. On the hilltop a wood pile was burning and this gave some little light. Slowly and very easily and softly I got on my knees and climbed out of the place where I had lain. I crawled back into the woods some distance where I found a dark spot and there sat down to think. I could not hear a sound, not even a horse stamping in the stable, nor a cow taking a deep breath. It was an awful scrape for a boy. I was sure all the others had been killed or carried off as prisoners by the Indians. All the dreadful stories I had been hearing for years came back to me, to make me afraid. I thought I might make my way to the little group of

houses called Middletown, about two miles away. I moved very cautiously along the slope of the hill toward the branch, aiming to strike some distance below our spring. I crossed the hollow and crept over the hill located on the south side of our land. I soon came to a piece of land which I did not recognize. I broke down, for I felt that I had lost my way. Miserable and weeping, I crouched down between the roots of a big tree. In a few moments I saw an animal coming toward me. It was my dog. He knew me and began to lick my hand and face. He was as glad to find me as I was to meet with him. His kisses on my face became too intimate and I put my hand up to ward off his licking. I found my face covered with something moist which I knew must be blood. There was so much of it that I was sure I had been cut with a scalping knife. With trembling fingers I felt the top of my head. I was very glad to find hair instead of bare skull. The blood had come from the tomahawk wound. As I wore only a shirt and a pair of homespun breeches, I was cold. I went to sleep, warmed by my faithful dog which lay quite still in my arms. It was daylight when I awoke. I decided to try again to find Middletown. I had not gone

far ere I heard footsteps approaching. I was thrown into another fright. If they were Indians I was a "goner." If whites, they seeing my red face might shoot me for an Indian. I hid myself under the side of a log as best I could. I was soon discovered and recognized by John Rose who was in the party. The party was under the command of Col. Richard Clough Anderson. (Note—Colonel Anderson lived on the big road from Middletown to Louisville, about five miles from our house. John Rose had made his escape and had gone to the house of Colonel Anderson, arriving before Mrs. Anderson had gone to sleep. Mrs. Anderson was a sister of General George Rogers Clark.) Mrs. Anderson heard footsteps and then a knock at the door. She roused her husband with a whisper of "Indians." They waited for another knock and then said, "Who is there?" "It's me, John Rose. Col. Anderson, the Indians have killed everybody at Chenoweth's." Colonel Anderson let him in and heard his story while he dressed. They then went out, and woke up all the men on the place. Some were sent on horseback to gather a company. (Note—In this company of men gathered by Colonel Anderson was a young man of nineteen years named Wm. Clark, a brother of General

George Rogers Clark, and Mrs. Anderson, just then a member of the household. He was one of the leaders of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 to 1806. I remember that he had the reddest head I had ever seen. I have heard that the western Indians wondered at and admired his hair, which they are said to have handled in order to see if the color rubbed off, and they must have thought what a unique scalp it would make) to come to our rescue. It was after midnight before the company assembled and arrangements had been made for the protection of Mrs. Anderson and her family, until the return of the party.

Colonel Anderson took me on his lap, and as we rode along he had me tell all I could about what had happened. Before we reached our farm, Colonel Anderson had everybody dismount and see that their guns were loaded and ready to fire. He then ordered three men to hold the horses. The others of the company were to walk toward our house and see if the Indians were there. Three men were sent ahead to give the alarm. But there was no sign of anyone. All around was quiet. No sounds at all. The Indians had taken all the horses, killed the cow, robbed the chicken roost and left, as they thought,

not a sign of life. They had burned poor Bayless, the guard, on the fire I had seen while hiding in the woodpile. Colonel Anderson cut his body down from the tree to which he had been tied and placed it on the ground. A piece of bedding was thrown over his face.

The Indians had set fire to the house but it had gone out. As Colonel Anderson stepped into the room in which we had been having supper, he saw little Naomi sitting in front of the fireplace, her little petticoat thrown over her head to cover her eyes. As soon as she heard a voice she dropped her petticoat and asked them not to kill her also. "Everybody else is dead," she said. She was asleep when the Indians came, and was rolled up in the bedclothes and was left unnoticed and unhurt. She had slept through it all and did not wake until daylight came. Finding no one about, and seeing everything destroyed, she thought everyone had been killed.

With the hope of finding some trace of the rest of the family, a search was at once ordered by Colonel Anderson. At the spring-house mother was discovered. She lay on the floor by the spring, almost dead, but had managed to get water. She had been scalped, tomahawked and wounded with an arrow. She soon rallied when in the hands of our friends. Colonel Anderson bound up her



bleeding head, dressed the arrow wound and put her left arm in a sling. He then washed my wound and face, and tied a bandage around my head. Jane had escaped to a neighbor's house. Milly received a bad gash in the arm and father had been grazed by a tomahawk.

Col. Anderson followed the trail of the Indians a short distance, but finding danger of an ambush he called his men in council. He was advised to return and take care of our family. After looking over the place he gathered up what clothing the Indians had left, and we prepared to make the journey to Colonel Anderson's, where we might be cared for until our home could be again established. I rode with a neighbor. Naomi rode with John Rose. Mother was placed in her own saddle, and a man rode on each side to keep her from falling. She stood the march like a soldier, and was quite strong when we reached Soldier's Retreat, as Colonel Anderson's place was called. Here Mrs. Anderson tenderly cared for her and for the rest of our family.

In a few days mother was strong enough to tell us of her dreadful experience. When the Indians broke in upon us, we all ran in every direction, and mother had started toward the spring-house, when she was shot between the

shoulder blades with an arrow. She stumbled and fell on her face. The Indian followed her, and probably supposing her dead, drew the arrow out, putting his foot on her back as he did so. He then began his triumphant work of scalping her. He first wound her long hair around one hand in order to get a better purchase. Then with "the very dullest and jaggedest knife that she ever felt," he cut the skin around her head just below the hair line. He then took the knife between his teeth. With both hands wrapped in her hair and with his foot on her back, he tore off the entire scalp, leaving her bare skull dripping blood from a thousand little blood vessels. To finish his work, he gave two blows from the butt of his tomahawk. She was conscious all this time, which seemed weeks to her. She suffered agonies beyond description without a shriek, or groan, or murmur. She wanted so much to live for such of her family as might escape, so she pretended to be dead. She lay in this place until the Indians had left. She then tottered toward the spring-house, falling from weakness and pain from her wounds. She struggled on until she came to the plank which led to the door in the garret of the spring-house. Here she fell, unable to rise

and walk the little distance on the plank. She lay there trying to gain strength. A bright light, caused by the Indians' attempt to burn the house, and their loud whoops, as they rushed about finishing their dreadful job, kept her conscious. The light gave her a clear view of the narrow plank. But at this time she was not able of herself to walk across. Then there came into her mind a flash of memory brighter than the flames of her home, a dear but almost forgotten hymn, "Jesus can make my path to shine." She rose and walked across the plank to the spring-house. In telling her story she always said she knew this was an inspiration from her Saviour, and therefore as an act of faith, like Peter walking on the water, she rose and walked the plank unto salvation. Was there ever such a martyr? Among the pioneer mothers of Kentucky she may have had an equal—she had no superior. She suffered from her wounds for a long time but finally fully recovered. However, she was a curiosity to see—without hair, or any place on her head for it to grow.

Our family was made comfortable at Colonel Anderson's while father and John Rose returned to our place and put the house in repair. Before Winter came we had gone

back to our house, and were doing as well as could be expected. Our great misfortune had been noised about, and people came from far and near to hear about the "massacre," as it was called. Our neighbors did everything they could to help us get started again. Our life henceforth was quiet and undisturbed.

The wound in my hip made by the Indian some years before had always given me pain. Often I was confined to my bed for days and even weeks. My strength was seriously undermined and I always felt badly because I could not run and romp as other boys. My mother agreed with me that there was something in the wound. She had father find out when Dr. Joseph Knight of Louisville would be in our section attending the sick. It was fourteen miles to town. It would take the Doctor a day to come and go, and besides the expense would be greater if we had him come just to see me. So we had him call the next time he made a trip to our settlement. The day on which he came I was dressed and around the house and was feeling very comfortable. Mother had him examine me. His examination was quite painful to me. Then he had me take off my breeches and sit astraddle of a chair, facing the back.

In those days we had no medicines or

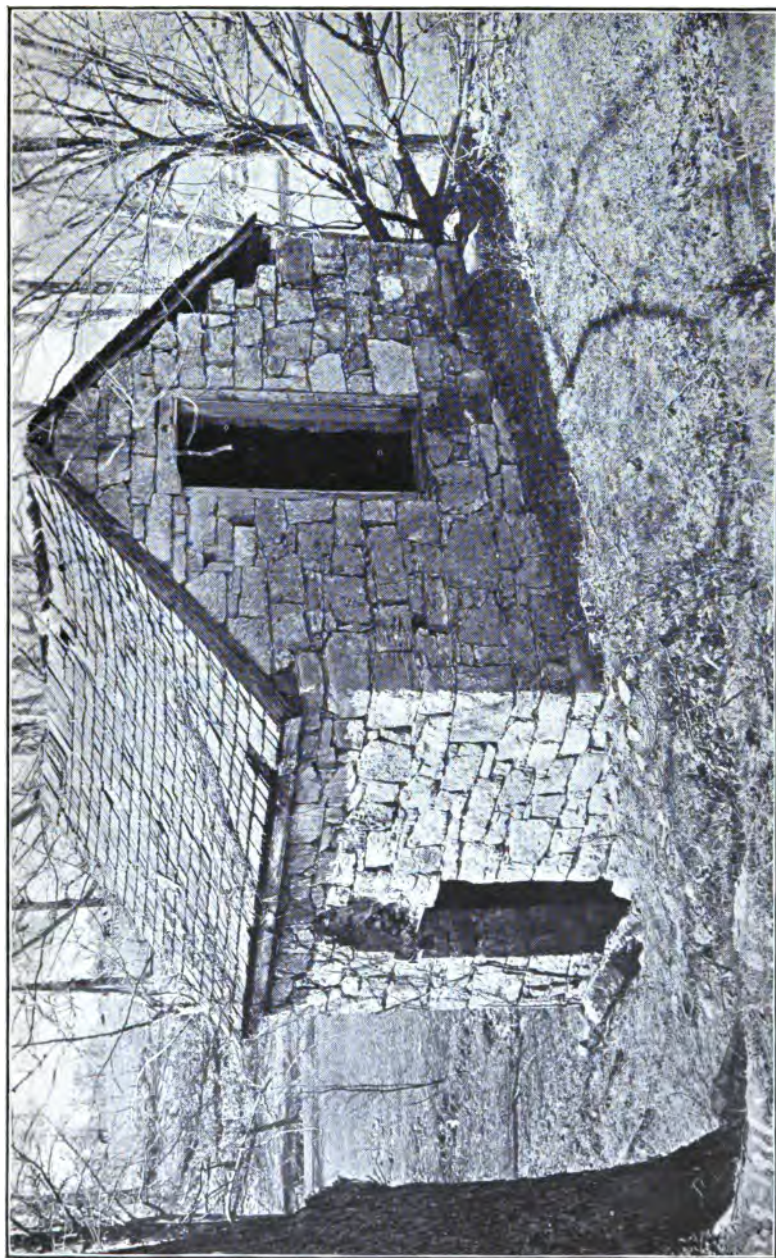
---

The  
Chenoweth Spring  
House

### THE CHENOWETH SPRING-HOUSE

(Where the massacre occurred July 17, 1789.)

Richard Chenoweth, following his neighbors, content with a log cabin for his home, decided to build his spring house of stone. Clearing a space of earth, rocks and trees, blasting the rock around a spring gushing (as it does today) from the hillside at a point about fourteen or fifteen miles from Louisville, Kentucky, built the spring-house, which is about fifteen feet square with a height of fifteen feet to the comb of the roof, walls two feet thick, an attic, and a door in the south next to the hill side. This spring-house stands today—a monument to the untiring efforts of the pioneer.



The Chenoweth Spring-house.





drugs to relieve pain. Chloroform had not been discovered. The doctor took out his instruments, put his fingers on the spot where it was tenderest, and with a quick stroke of his knife cut a gash deep and wide enough to insert his thumb and forefinger. He drew out a piece of iron arrowhead which had reached the bone and, returning, was coming out. I did not have time to give more than one or two yells before it was all over.

In two or three weeks I was going about gaining strength daily. I was soon stronger than I had ever been. I had no use for doctors for many years. I grew to be quite a boy before I could read. A friend named Gaines, a gentleman of education, visited us often. One day he suggested that he would send me something to read. I was compelled to admit that I had never even learned to spell. This increased his interest in me. From an old newspaper he taught me my letters. In a few months I had learned to read. Since that day what I now know about books I have learned myself. I was never in a schoolhouse as a scholar. I have frequently been there to hear and see exhibitions of what boys, more fortunate than I, have learned. Books were not common in my

boyhood. Such books as a household owned were read and re-read, until their contents were almost learned by heart. Newspapers were very scarce and were passed around the neighborhood until they were worn out. There were no envelopes in those days in which to send letters.

Letters were carefully folded and sealed with wax or with a wafer. The address was written on the outside. Mail was generally given to some reliable person who happened to be going to the place to which it was addressed, consequently it took weeks for letters to go from Louisville to the lower counties of Virginia. You seldom heard of anyone opening a letter confided to his care. I have heard of more than one who had been guilty of carrying a letter in his hunting shirt for weeks, forgetting to mail it. Under such circumstances people wrote letters only about important matters. Few people had use for their hand-writing. They were better at handling the axe or the rifle. I never was much of a hand at any of them, though I have managed to get along in the world.

You may remember that I spoke of my having risen to the dignity of breeches when the massacre occurred. This was an advance above the tow-linen shirt of two years pre-

vious. When the children grew large enough to require clothes, the mother of the family made them much after the pattern of clothes worn by the grown folks. They would not look very nice to the boys of the present time, 1850.

By 1796 the settlers in Jefferson County had become very numerous. A settled road now led through the woods to Middletown and on to where Shelbyville is now located. The settlers who first moved out from Louisville were attracted by the fine land on the middle fork of Beargrass Creek. They then occupied the land toward the east where a little fort was built which was called Spring Station. This was about four miles from town. Further up the creek Christian's Station, Sturgis and Lynn's were located. Colonel Anderson's place was also on the road which connected these places.

You may be interested to know that this road was nothing like roads we have today. The man who first laid it out chose the best (most level) ground he could find. Then with his axe he marked the trees which were in the center of his line. On one side of the road he would make two "blazes" on the trees, and on the other side of the road three "blazes," or chips, out of the tree, would be made. When he came to a point where the

road turned, he marked the center tree with one "blaze." This road was afterward cleared of the trees and stumps and made passable, except in the Spring of the year, when it was very muddy. It was at all times better than following the old trail.

My boyhood was over when I was sixteen. I felt I was now ready to do my part of the work of reclaiming the country from the forest and the Indians. Yet I must confess that, after our disaster, I never had an inclination to go hunting, or to fight with the Indians.

Father now had all the work he could attend to. Most of his work was building plain cabins for the settlers. Now and then some gentleman from Virginia or Pennsylvania would have a fine house erected. It was at a house raising in 1796, not far from our home, that he was crushed to death by a falling log.

We did not remain long at this place after father's death. We moved to a place some five miles east of Shelbyville called Big Spring. Here mother lived to be over eighty years of age.

My life since has not been eventful. I married. My wife has passed away. My children are well to do, and live in Kentucky and Ohio. I am now under the loving care of my oldest son, John, where I hope to end my days.







# Where Louisville Started

by

ALFRED PIRTLE



---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

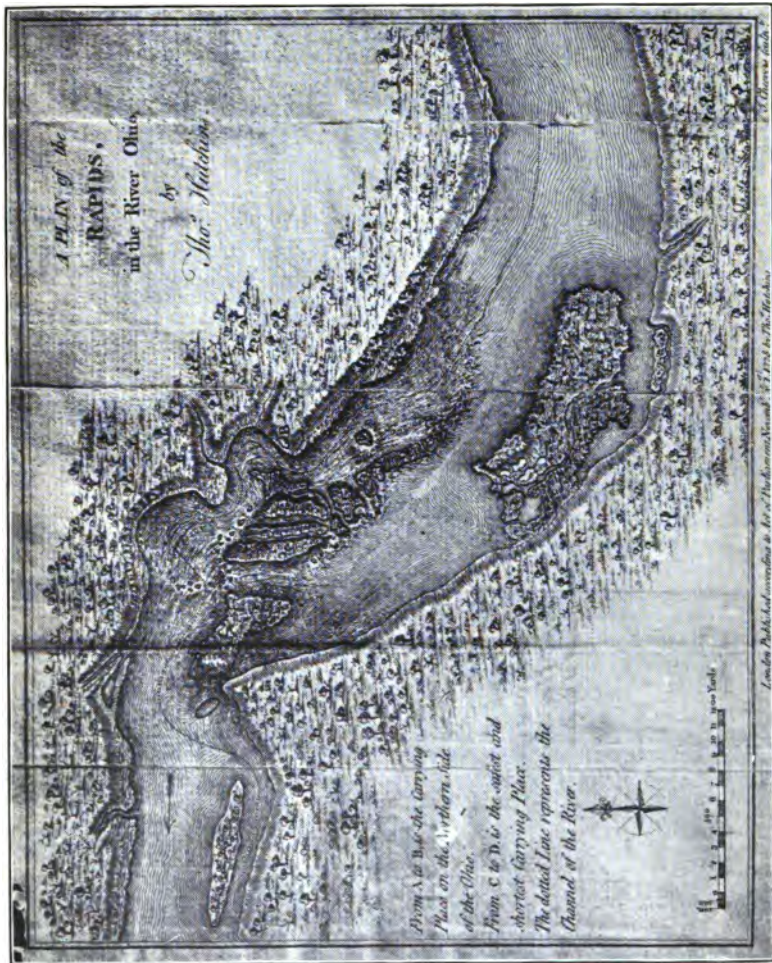
### A PLAN OF THE RAPIDS IN THE RIVER OHIO

By Thomas Hutchins, an officer of the British Army, in 1769.

The country is covered with trees; the rapids are correctly drawn near the right bank or what is known as the Indiana shore. The dotted line shows the "channel of the river." Boatmen followed this course which had been taught by the Indians to the French, who in turn taught it to the English.

It was on one of these islands in 1778, a small body of soldiers, brought here by Lieutenant Colonel George Rogers Clark, planted corn for food during that Summer, which fact gave the name of "Corn Island" to the spot.





A Plan of the Rapids in the River Ohio.



## WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED

THE winter of 1777 was on, and Major George Rogers Clark, of the Virginia troops, traveled from Kentucky to Richmond, Va., to use his influence with Governor Patrick Henry for the benefit of the new country and its people away out beyond the mountains. He told Governor Henry of their want of protection from the Indians of north of the Ohio, and laid before him the plans he (Clark) had thoroughly thought out, that the best method of protecting the infant settlement was by attacking the British of Detroit, Vincennes and Kaskaskia, where lay the sources of the Indian depredations. In addition to this point, he pictured to the Governor the value such an attack on the possessions and forces of the British would be, in the grand campaign to be waged during the coming year. Some months passed in preparation of the expedition, which had the full endorsement of Governor Henry and the Military Committee.

---

## WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED

---

The men were enrolled, equipped and assembled at Redstone on the Monongahela River (now called Brownsville, Pa.), during the spring of 1778, and Clark, promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, floated down to Fort Pitt, (now Pittsburgh), where the expedition completed its stores and ammunition, and started down the Ohio, early in the month of May, having something like eighty settlers, traveling under the protection of the military part of the expedition. Moving slowly, camping on the shore at night, the fleet was moored to the trees on the shores of an island at the head of the Falls of the Ohio, May 27, 1778.

Clark remained on this island some weeks, while the soldiers cleared a part of the trees away, made a stockade and cabins for the settlers to occupy, erected some store rooms to protect the military supplies, which he left under the guard of ten men; and the large body of men, over 125, made short work of the above mentioned improvements. The settlers planted a crop of corn on the island, which gave the name by which it has since been known in history, (Corn Island), but it has long since been swept away by the Ohio.

During an eclipse of the sun, Lieutenant Colonel Clark, with the main body of troops

Hand Mill  
for  
Grinding Corn

---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

### THE ANCIENT HANDMILL FOR GRINDING CORN MEAL

Although surrounded by much that is modern, and lacking in details, the above illustration will give an idea of the hard work required to produce a quantity of meal or crushed wheat sufficient for a few persons.

### WATER MILLS FLOURISHED AT AN EARLY PERIOD

The John Filson map of 1784 shows a grist mill run by water from the big spring about four miles from the Chenoweth place at what is now Lakeland.



The Ancient Handmill for Grinding Corn.





---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

left the Falls of the Ohio, June 24, and in row boats proceeded rapidly down the Ohio, until he came to the ruins of Ft. Massac, about 40 miles from the mouth of the Ohio, where he landed, and from there marched overland, and in the early part of July, captured Kaskaskia and the other posts on the east bank of the Mississippi. It is not the intention in this sketch to give any account of this most remarkable man's extraordinary achievements on this campaign, but remember when you think of it, that Clark was not twenty-six years of age until the following November.

He did not forget his little band of people on the island at the Falls of the Ohio, for he sent them orders, by two messengers (one was Simon Kenton), who reached there in September, on their way to Richmond, Va., with despatches for Governor Henry, that they were to remove to the mainland on the Kentucky shore and build a wooden fort and cabins in which to pass the next winter.

The hand of man had not then been laid upon the rocks and islands in the river, and the bottom of the river was laid bare in the season of low water, between Corn Island and the Kentucky shore and the people could move across without impediment. The woods gave them fuel and food from the game

---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

which roamed in their depths. Water from a spring near at hand was a requisite, and this was found at the foot of the second bank of the river, and the site of the first fort was selected, not far from this spring, which within the memory of the writer supplied a brewery, directly at the foot of Twelfth Street.

The building of the fort was done by the soldiers left by Clark and the men of the little body of settlers, under the direction of Richard Chenoweth, a housebuilder, who had brought his wife and children with him to make a home in the wilderness.

The bank of the river, where they decided to place themselves, was a little higher than the ground now is, and the location gave a view up and down the river for miles.

George Rogers Clark had been well educated in Virginia, his native State, was a good surveyor and made a clear map, drawn to a scale, of the young settlement in 1779, and the map shows that the first settlement in Louisville was on the spot now occupied by the Conrad Shoe Company, on the south side of Rowan Street, about one hundred feet east of Twelfth Street. A few years ago, the Filson Club appointed Colonel R. T. Durrett, Mr. Donald McDonald, Miss Barlow, Mrs.

---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

Sallie Marshall Hardy and Alfred Pirtle, to make a personal inspection of the ground, and to locate the exact position of the first fort in Louisville. With the map in hand, it was not at all difficult to reach the conclusion, given above, that the fort was situated as stated in the preceding paragraph.

The trees were cut down and removed from sufficient space to erect a stockade and cabins to enclose a space approximately two hundred feet long by one hundred wide. Block houses were built at the four corners, while eight cabins on each long side, which ran north and south, and four on each end, east and west, and the stockades between the cabins formed the enclosure, the cabins being with their backs to the outside and their doors opening on the "parade", as it came to be called. The block houses were two stories high, with the second story overhanging the lower, so that no enemy could get under the stockade in day-light without being seen. The roofs of the cabins and block houses sloped to the inside of the fort. The main gate was near the northwest block house. All the brush was cleared away some hundred yards from the fort and afterwards the trees were cut down as the timber was needed.

---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

The fort was habitable in December, and the first Christmas party in Louisville was given December 24 and 25, 1778, in the northeast block house, which Richard Chenoweth finished in time for the great feast that was the principal part of the evening except the dancing by music furnished by Cato, the darkey fiddler of the settlement.

There is no question of the locality of the fort, for Colonel Clark returned to Louisville, after his capture of Vincennes and made his headquarters there, while he built a larger and permanent fort at the foot of Seventh Street on Main Street in 1782.

Clark was a civil engineer and evidently saw the high water mark on the shore, hence his requiring the removal of the settlement from the island to the mainland before winter set in, so they would be safely housed before an early spring flood.

To construct the fort as directed by Lieutenant Colonel Clark, the site was first selected and marked out by clearing the small trees and under brush from the outlines of the space that was to be enclosed. Then the trees within the area were cut down, the limbs trimmed off and the trunks made into logs of the proper length, either for making the block

---

## WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED

---

houses, the log cabins, the stockade, gates, doors, floors and roofs. Such wood as remained was chopped into pieces for firewood.

The tools mostly used by the pioneers were axes, saws and augers. With an ax only, a man skilled in handling it could get from the tree as it lay, almost any part of the building he needed, that is, the logs that were to make the walls and windows, the flat pieces that were used for the floor, and the split pieces (clapboards), to go upon the rafters and make the roof. Pins trimmed from the smaller pieces, to take the place of bolts or nails, were used to fasten the various parts of the building together. Having raised the house to the proper height, the rafters, split out of young trees, were placed on the walls and made secure at the proper angle to throw off the rain and snow, and instead of nails driven into each clapboard that made the roof, long timbers were laid lengthwise of the roof; on these clapboards were laid, and on them, other long pieces were placed in which holes were bored and long wooden pins driven in, so as to hold the two long pieces and the clapboards all together.

The doors, of straight grained wood, split and smoothed with the ax, were hung on wooden hinges, fastened by wooden pins to a wood-

---

*WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

en frame. A large latch, also of wood, dropped into a wooden catch on the door frame inside the cabin. Above the latch was a hole in the door, through which the latch string hung down on the outside so that the latch could be raised from without, and a sign that one must knock or ask to be admitted was made by taking the latch string inside. Hence the saying, "Hang the latch string out", as a sign of hospitable welcome. The windows had no glass for many years after the settlement of the State, but there were wooden shutters hung to close very much the same as the doors, except the latch was not used but a hole was bored in a log or part of the frame, at an angle that would admit a piece of wood to be placed, so as to keep the shutter firmly closed against wind or against an enemy. The fire place was large, deep and ample in every way, for wood cost nothing except labor, and a fire burned all the time for light or cooking. Where stone was near, the chimney was built of it, or if it was scarce or difficult to get, the walls of the chimney were made of sticks of wood laid upon each other with a thick coat of mud between, and a liberal application of it on the inside where it soon baked hard. But there were chimneys that took fire, yet it was seldom, and many a cabin escaped entirely.

---

## WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED

---

As the fort was building, the space to be occupied by each cabin was laid off, and that space between them was to be filled with a stockade. The timber for this was taken from small trees, cut to about fifteen feet long and split down the center. One end of each piece was sharpened with the ax, so that the pieces of timber when placed on end and so close together that there were no places for a bullet to go through, formed an edge like a saw. To put the stockade in place, a trench was dug deep enough to put the timbers three feet, at least, in the ground, thus making them too high for a man to scale unless with the help of a ladder of some kind. The earth was rammed tight around the stockade, and in a few months it was perfectly firm. These pieces of wood were selected with care so as not to have any places where bullets could get through, be heavy enough to turn the bullets or stroke of a tomahawk if thrown of against it; in fact, resist anything but the fire cannons.

In 1782 Clark, promoted to Brigadier General, built the second fort, named Fort Nelson for the Governor of Virginia, at Seventh Street and the river, which he made more substantial than the first fort.

---

## *WHERE LOUISVILLE STARTED*

---

Colonel George Rogers Clark relics from the collection of the late Colonel R. T. Durrett.

Tomahawk on the left of the picture; the length of the handle is very unusual and must have been used for some important purpose.

The watch is of good size and of strong material. Must have been quite heavy to carry.

The pocket compass has a frame to hang in upon the wall when not in use in the woods.

The scalping knife is of unusual form and size. White men learned from the Indians to carry this knife because of the great number of ways it became useful in the woods.

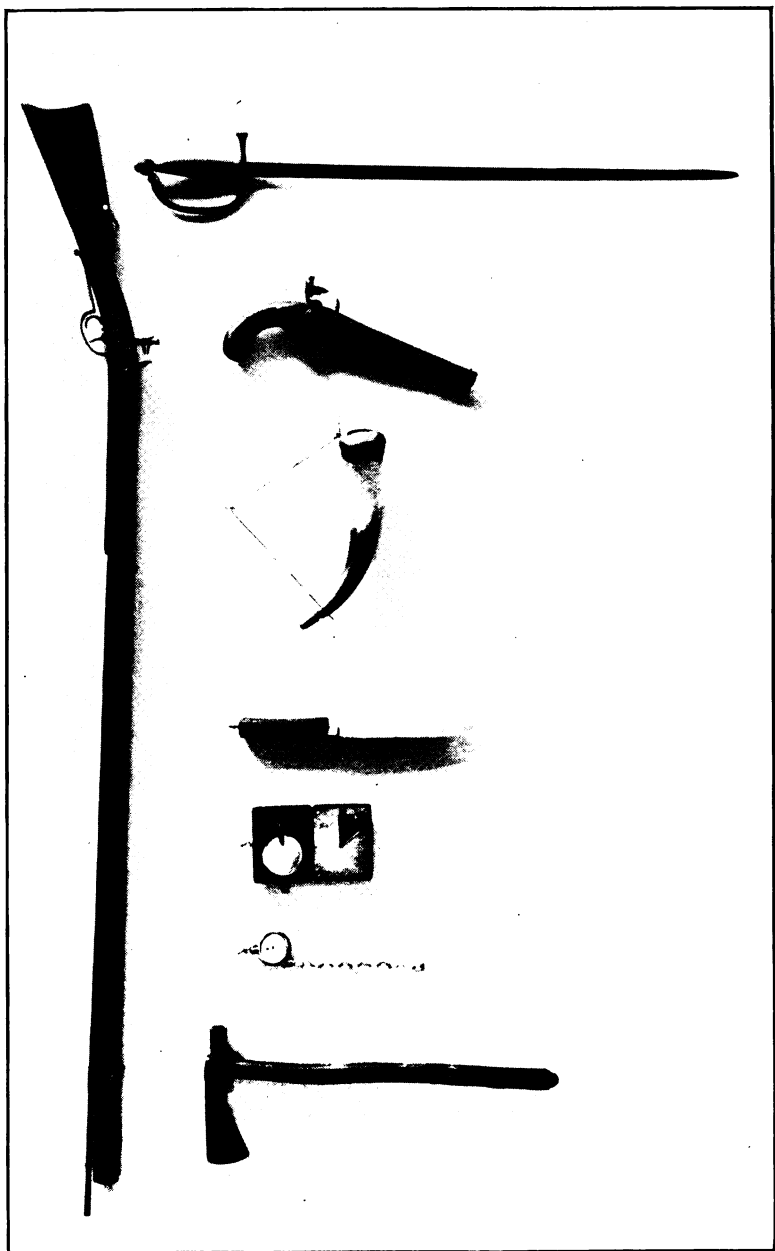
The powder horn is rather plain but a fine specimen. For the hunter and warrior it was indispensable because all the guns and pistols were loaded from the muzzle.

The gun and pistol have what is known as flint locks. The pistol has a flint but this is lacking on the rifle. A ramrod appears on the underneath side of the rifle.

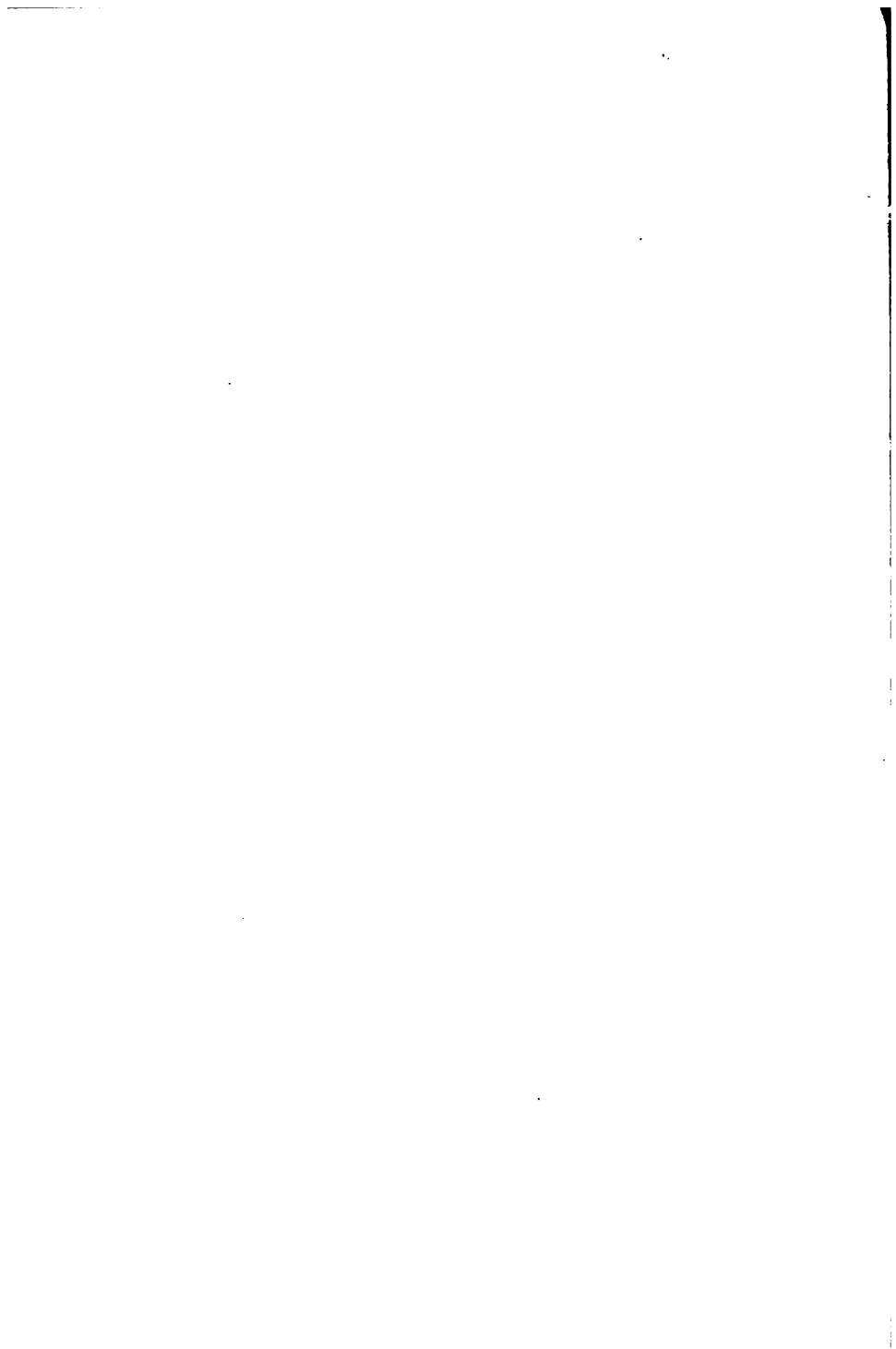
The pistol and rifle were probably made in Birmingham, England, for the Indians and whites bought from importers from England.

The sword is said to have been used by a musician during the Revolutionary War. It is longer than any that have been used in the United States Army.





Colonel George Rogers Clark Relics from the Collection of the late  
Colonel R. T. Durrett.



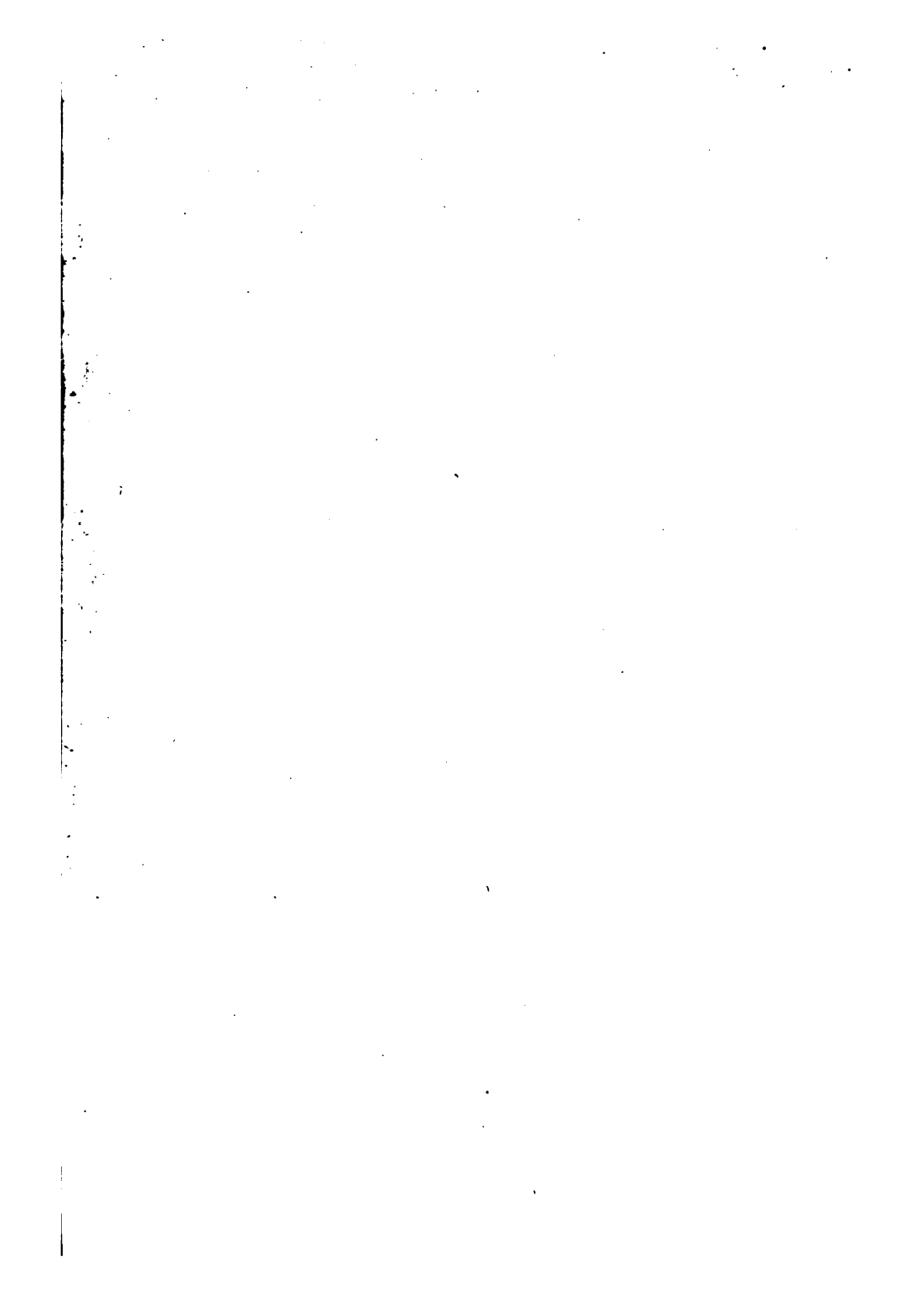






\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.